An opinion of an Oxford tutor in a case of surgery, of a physician in a matter of theology, or of a mill-owner or manufacturer in a moot point in law, would have no great weight, and would hardly be offered; but the difficult question of the merit of an architectural design, is one on which all think themselves able to arrive at sound judgment. The architect is not free from the error, which he is ready to ascribe to these, if he passes judgment in the same ignorance of facts and data. He possesses a knowledge of the art, which would enable him to detect the fact of an invention, to estimate its value compared with other variations of the same feature, and to ascribe to the author the merit which is due. He is able to see the reason which should be apparent, for the use of any particular form, whether in its pre-eminent beauty, or in beauty conjoined with variety,—for he will not forget that the most beautiful form which the architect might know to be available, is not always that which he would be right in choosing; he must produce that which has novelty, as well as that which has propriety and accordance with principle, and is relatively beautiful. He has the aptitude to discover the circumstances which influenced or restricted the design: let him use this faculty, or in place of a hasty judgment, give that deference to him who has had the best means of balancing every requirement with every feature of effect, and who has at least devoted mature consideration to them. It is easy to discover errors, but difficult wholly to avoid them. Let the architectural critic, whilst requiring that a reason should be given for the preference of a particular form, not refuse to seek that reason which could often so readily be offered.

"But you are tired—I'll tell a tale.—Agreed.—
Where London's column, point ——"

No, that is not the story, and how, indeed, could it have been known to Pope, for although a building, unfinished, does not always imply that it was commenced only lately (for proof of which see a "column" upon which Pope would have written a satire,—"The Nelson"), yet the elegant structure to be referred to, was certainly not commenced very long since. And if consequently, it is not recorded in a chronicle of very early date, that a building intended to serve the purpose of a museum, was in progress in the parish of St. James's, the anecdote to be related came to the knowledge of this present deponent through some channel of equally undisputed verity. It is said, that this building has for its author an architect who would do nothing without being able to give a "reason" for adopting any particular arrangement or decorative detail.—The principal, or most elaborate front, which has lofty stories, and very large windows, is in a wide street, one of the principal thoroughfares, whilst the entrance is in another front which is much less elaborate, and is in a narrow street. It chanced—so runs the story—that two architects, one of mature age, and the other young, together examined this building. The younger was the first to give an opinion. He said nothing of the beauty, or otherwise, of the doorway, of its importance compared with those of public buildings generally, or of its obviously serving for the entrance to an important public building; the details of windows, arches, panels, cornice, coins, and piers, were unobserved, but he confined himself to one item of arrangement, which to him gave ground for indiscriminate censure. The architect, he said, by placing the entrance in what was not the principal elevation, had acted in direct contravention of one of the most recognised principles of arrangement and design. This was, he said, in all cases, to place the doorway in the most important position, so that it should be obvious to all who wished to enter the building, and to make it so not only by position, but prominent by its decoration; and he affirmed, that every stranger who wished to visit the Museum, would be unable to find where the doorway was, unless a direction-board were placed against the building, which, to his thinking, would make the design very ridiculous. To him, the other, who may have been the writer of this notice, answered:—"Your principles are good ones, but you have committed the usual error of the young, in arriving at a hasty conclusion, with no knowledge of the premises—without considering how far other principles, in addition to what you have mentioned, may have required to be taken into account in this particular instance. You do not allow anything to the architect for circumstances of ground, light, and destination of the building. You forget that it has been the fate of every architect, as it assuredly will be that of yourself, to find our own wishes secondary to the caprice of employers, and that Wren is to this day censured for defects in the architecture of St. Paul's Cathedral, which did not exist in the design which he was anxious to have adopted. You have remarked how often, in really excellent works, a confined site has required the entrance to be placed at the side, and not in the centre of the building; *that* position you would, if quite consistent, object to. For myself, I wish to feel none of that envy which is said to be inseparable from artists; and whilst I would not have that incompetence which would blind me to positive defects, I would rather dwell upon beauties. In this instance, I know that we are looking at the work of a practised architect, and I would, as a talented professor has recommended, judge this master with the generosity of the English law, which considers all as innocent till proved to be guilty. I have no doubt that good reason could be given for selecting an arrangement which is unusual, and that reason would remove, with me, all ground to ascribe negligence and bad judgment to the architect. I may differ in opinion, but if he can give good reason for *his* view, that is all that I require; and in any case I will not be debarred from admiring the design in other features, if it deserve it. But, I may say, that had the entrance been in the principal front, the space would have been—if I guess at the plan rightly—most injuriously interfered with, where, from the imperative necessity of good light in this building, it could ill be spared, and whether this be the reason of the arrangement, or not, the error of your criticism is, that you have not taken this point into consideration. Had you done so, your condemnation of the architect might have been qualified." Such is the story,—the moral has in this case preceded it.

COLOUR IN ARCHITECTURE.

THE ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION.

At a meeting of the Architectural Association, held in Lyon's Inn Hall, on Friday, May 12th, a paper was read by Mr. William Wood Deane, "On the Application of Colour to Architecture." The author commenced by pointing out the universal presence of colour in the works of nature, and its great effect in the production of their beauty, observing that, as all man's ideas of beauty are derived from nature's works, to delight man the artist must endeavour to work like nature, and avail himself of the means which she employs to produce pleasurable sensations.

The first essential of beauty in architecture is form, but nature is not content with form alone, and indicates colour also as a legitimate means of producing additional beauty. The author took a rapid survey of the different modes in which coloured decoration had been employed in architecture during each succeeding age, from the days of Egypt's grandeur to the present time, observing that such a review is calculated to remove all scruples in respect to the employment of colour, from the minds of even the most prejudiced worshipper of precedent; while to those who study the works of past ages, merely to profit by their experience, to whom they are aids to originality rather than restraints upon their fancy and genius, such vestiges of antiquity are replete with suggestions of the greatest value.

The application of polychromatic painting to external architecture has received much attention abroad, and led to several bold attempts in Germany and France. In a country like our own, where surface decoration appears in continual danger of destruction by the weather, external painted decoration was thought to be inadmissible. But our various building materials afford opportunities of producing much agreeable variety of colour. The tints of the materials of a building should harmonise as far as possible with surrounding objects.

Interior decoration has for years received undeserved neglect at the hands of the architects of England, but it is a subject which has happily begun to engage the attention of the artist and the connoisseur. Historical paintings are undoubtedly the noblest means of introducing colour,—as these, while they assist the design of the architect, are themselves to be ranked among the noblest efforts of the human mind, calculated at once to adorn, to delight, and to instruct. Polychromatic painting affords a means of displaying the liveliest fancy and most elegant design; and even in essentially cheap architecture, a few well-disposed lines of harmonious colour may give a pleasing character to an apartment, at a very small outlay of money, although not without the exercise of a considerable amount of judgment. Painted glass may be used with propriety in classic as well as in pointed architecture; although the practice of imitating oil paintings in this material, in vogue during the last century, is undoubtedly a misapplication.

In conclusion, it was contended that the application of colour to architecture had been proved to be in accordance with the practice of the past ages, to which architects look for precedent, and, above all, to be a mode of obtaining beauty taught and practised by nature, from whose example all true art is derived.

RAILWAY JOTTINGS.

THE number of passengers carried on railways in the United Kingdom during the year ending 30th June, 1847, was 51,352,163*l.*; receipts, 5,148,002*l.*; and for goods, cattle, &c., 3,362,884*l.*: total, 8,510,886*l.*: increase on preceding year, one million. The rates of fare average on the Midland lines—first class, 3d.; second, 2d.; third, 1d. per mile: on the Great Western, 2¾d., 1¾d., and 1d. per mile; on the North Western, 2½d., 1½d., and 9-10d. per mile. ——The Scottish Companies are preparing for a conjoint application, along with the English Companies, to Government, for a loan of money to enable them to finish their respective undertakings, and thereby afford employment to the destitute working population.——In describing the late fearful accident from which we so narrowly and fortuitously escaped on the Great Western, we believe we gave the gist of the unfortunate cause which led to it, in saying that the train, being a few minutes after the usual time of passing the Shrivenham station, the porter in fault, who was usually at dinner during that time, concluded, or took it for granted, on his return, that it had passed as usual. Now, instead of allowing any such employé to *conclude* habitually that events have taken place as usual, were the law strictly laid down that the very contrary 'conclusion' be in all such cases come to till *its* contrary be ascertained, a fruitful source of accidents, would be sure to be obviated. As the *Times* justly remarks—"Where human life is concerned, nothing should be taken for granted—everything should be proved—nothing but danger should be apprehended until the contrary be ascertained." For the neglect of so simple and effectual a regulation every company must forthwith be held responsible. Indeed, it appears most strange that so obvious and correct and essential a rule should still remain to be established on any line, and more especially on the Great Western, where, perhaps, more good-will to establish public safeguards has been displayed than elsewhere. ——A correspondent of the *Birmingham Journal* points attention to the fact that repeated, but hitherto unavailing, recommendations have been made by juries at Rugby in cases of accident, "that a suitable place be provided at the station for the reception of those who meet with accidents." It is easy to see the force of those motives, which, apart altogether from questions of expense, may have operated in the prevention of so desirable and requisite an adjunct to accidents ever and anon occurring; but so long as accidents do occur, or have so much chance of occurring as they still have, Companies ought to be compelled to prepare beforehand the most ample and ready accommodation, with all requisite surgical and medical appliances. In this case, certainly, ridicule and the fear of ridicule have not operated as a corrective agency, but the contrary, for which we believe our worthy

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